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President: Mr. Opertti ..... (Uruguay)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 99

Commemorative meeting of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): This commemorative meeting of the General Assembly is being held in accordance with the decision adopted at its 3rd plenary meeting on 15 September 1998 and pursuant to resolution 52/205 of 18 December 1997.

I would request that during this meeting of the Assembly we strive to be as brief and concise in our statements as possible, in view of the value that we attach to our time.

We are meeting here today to commemorate a key event in the history of international cooperation for development. The United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, held in Buenos Aires from 30 August to 12 September 1978, was a milestone in the United Nations system's ongoing efforts to promote international cooperation for development, which, as we all know, is one of the primary objectives of the Organization. The Conference adopted the Buenos Aires Plan of Action as a normative framework designed to improve the structure of international relations by placing greater emphasis on the use of the increasing technical and scientific capacities of developing countries in the promotion of socio-economic development in the South.

As the ultimate goal of technical cooperation among developing countries, the Plan establishes, on the one hand, the promotion of national and collective self-reliance among developing countries, and, on the other hand, the fostering of global partnership. Accordingly, for the past 20 years the Buenos Aires Plan of Action has provided a policy framework to enable developing countries to enhance their self-reliance by harnessing and exploiting their own capacities.

To underscore the continued importance of international partnership, the Plan emphasizes that its new proposals are complementary to, not a substitute for, traditional forms of North-South development cooperation. Although it assigns primary responsibility to developing countries for organizing, managing and financing technical cooperation among themselves, the Plan also calls upon the United Nations development system to play a catalytic and promotional role in advancing this cooperation.

The Plan sets forth a number of goals that require developing countries to enhance their creative capacities; share their human and technical resources; upgrade the quality and scope of international cooperation; and expand and refine communications among themselves on the national, subregional, regional and interregional levels.

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The continuing validity of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action has been repeatedly reaffirmed by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the conferences and governing bodies of many specialized agencies. In particular, General Assembly resolution 46/159 indicates that technical cooperation among developing countries remains a key element in global economic cooperation. In resolution 48/172, the Assembly went further by urging Member States, the United Nations Development Programme and other organizations of the United Nations development system to give high priority and full support to technical cooperation among developing countries.

Since the 1970s, developing countries have increasingly used the technical cooperation framework to strengthen the bonds of cooperation among themselves in the context of formal subregional and regional integration arrangements and through more flexible cooperative exchanges. The developing countries have also sought to promote genuine partnership among themselves on the understanding that each country has resources and capacities that it can share and offer, as well as needs that may be satisfied by others. Many countries have taken the initiative of establishing well-defined policies and appropriate institutional arrangements in order to ensure a coordinated approach and to find common solutions to common problems within the framework of technical cooperation among developing countries. In the wake of recent trends towards globalization, technical cooperation among developing countries is increasingly being recognized as an important instrument for enabling countries of the South to participate effectively in the emerging new world order. This is all the more true given the well-known trend among the industrialized countries to reduce official development assistance, in particular as regards the allocation of funds to multilateral programmes and agencies.

In order that the full potential of technical cooperation among developing countries may be realized and to fulfil the expectations raised 20 years ago by the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, all Member States, developed and developing alike, must seize the current momentum and build upon the past achievements in technical cooperation among developing countries. This will require tireless efforts to make the potential of technical cooperation among developing countries widely understood, to strengthen the effectiveness of normative frameworks, procedures and focal points for technical cooperation among developing countries on the national level, and to promote information-sharing among developing countries at the subregional, regional, interregional and global levels. It will also require the international community to be more forthcoming with financing for activities undertaken within the context of technical cooperation among developing countries.

Thus, this commemorative meeting is an opportune moment for the international community to renew the political will necessary to overcome the factors hindering the optimal utilization of the existing capacities and resources and to accelerate development throughout the developing world. Given the prevailing mix of opportunities and challenges presented by globalization, the potential of such exchanges needs to be fully exploited. The promising prospects of increased trade and investment opportunities in the South are discernible in the current demographic projections, which indicate that, by the year 2025, nearly 7 billion of the projected world population of 8.5 billion people will live in the South — 7 out of 8.5 billion. This suggests that there is tremendous scope for the South to capitalize on increased market and investment opportunities.

In conclusion, responding to the recommendations of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action in the new context of globalization — an issue to which this Assembly has been paying particular attention — requires developed and developing countries to work cooperatively to devise new and improved approaches both for national institutions and on the global scale, so as to promote public and private enterprise, actions by economic players and by States themselves, in order to achieve the lofty objective of technical cooperation among developing countries.

I now give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General.

The Deputy Secretary-General: We are gathered here to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, in keeping with the General Assembly resolution adopted to that effect last year. Over these two decades, the international community has taken seriously the recommendations contained in the Plan of Action. Against the background of growing disparities between rich and poor countries, the Plan was designed to provide a road map for narrowing that gap.

The Plan urged all partners involved in international development cooperation to bring South-South solutions to shared development challenges by increasing the use of the human capacities and material resources that exist in the South.

South-South cooperation has enjoyed official recognition in the United Nations since the Buenos Aires Conference in 1978. It encompasses two types of partnership: technical cooperation among developing countries and economic cooperation among developing countries. The two interrelated approaches are intended to enable the South to promote collective self-reliance and to participate effectively in the international economic system.

Since the 1970s the benefits of South-South cooperation have been most manifest in the formation of regional groupings across the South. Through regional integration, many countries have expanded their market size, accelerated the pace of industrialization and laid the foundation for a more systematic integration of production structures across national boundaries. While some of these integration schemes have stagnated, many have made steady progress and gained vitality and momentum during the 1980s and 1990s.

The profound changes that have occurred in the international system since the late 1980s have had an equally profound impact on multilateral development cooperation. They have established a new context and a new rationale for promoting technical cooperation and South-South cooperation in general. These developments have underscored the futility of unilateral action in an interdependent world.

Since the 1970s the United Nations has played an important role in promoting technical cooperation. It has provided guidance on policies and procedures. It has supported institutional capacity-building, networking and information systems. Many United Nations organizations and agencies, including regional commissions, have actively promoted policies that place great emphasis on South-South cooperation.

In the area of capacity-building, UNDP has provided support to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Central American Common Market and commodity groups such as the Union of Banana-Exporting Countries in efforts to strengthen their overall capacity. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) have provided similar assistance to various regional groupings in the development of national and regional institutions of developing countries in keeping with their respective mandates and expertise.

With support from the United Nations organizations and agencies, improved networking and twinning arrangements have become a significant feature of technical cooperation in recent years. UNESCO has supported educational networks in the Caribbean and fostered exchanges among various scientific organizations worldwide. The ILO has facilitated exchanges among various centres of excellence in the field of labour administration. Using networks to foster food security, FAO has been instrumental in the creation of the Biogas Network in Latin America and has supported the establishment of food crops networks. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has supported a trade information network linking a number of Asian countries in addition to sponsoring the Global Trade Point Network, which applies modern information technology to trade promotion.

Many developed countries have been very supportive of technical cooperation activities initiated by groups of developing countries. Japan, Ireland and South Korea have contributed generously to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation, established in 1995 by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme. Brazil and Chile have set up special funds to assist other developing countries in Latin America within the framework of TCDC. In light of the declining trend in official development assistance, as well as in core resources available to UNDP and other United Nations agencies, increased contributions to the Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation are needed.

The unprecedented changes which have occurred in the international economic system since the 1980s — principally the globalization of markets and production structures — make South-South cooperation more valid and relevant than ever as an instrument for helping developing countries to participate effectively in the emerging economic order.

Several challenges lie ahead. First, despite the accelerated differentiation in socio-economic performance among developing countries, we must recognize that the countries of the South still share a number of basic development needs. These include the need for external capital and development assistance; for access to export

markets and foreign exchange; for technologies; and for an external economic environment that is fair, predictable and stable.

Secondly, these shared needs establish a new rationale for South-South cooperation. It is one that requires developing countries to pool their human and material resources and to work collectively for a more just, equitable and democratic world system. If the countries of the South are to be masters of their destiny, they need to have an effective voice in all international forums.

Thirdly, given the complex mix of opportunities and challenges presented by globalization, the United Nations system and the international community as a whole must adjust to the demands of the new development context and redouble their efforts in support of technical and economic cooperation.

Fourthly, all organizations and agencies of the United Nations system must implement Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/41. They must ensure that technical and economic cooperation are given first consideration in the design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of their operational activities. The United Nations family should also increase the allocation of resources for technical and economic cooperation from their regular programme budgets. United Nations organizations and agencies should find opportunities to promote joint cooperative arrangements and bring their various sectoral competencies to bear on South-South cooperation activities. Regional Commissions should play an active role in promoting and supporting intra- and interregional activities of strategic importance to subregional and regional groupings.

This meeting, on the eve of the new millennium, provides an opportune moment for the international community to reflect upon the resources, strategies and partnerships that developing countries need to seize the opportunities our globalizing world presents.

In this era of dwindling resources for development, it is critically important to build new partnerships to draw on mutual knowledge and capacities. United Nations organizations and agencies should strengthen contacts with organizations in the developing world and help foster effective participation of the private sector in technical and economic cooperation activities. And I urge all countries to contribute to the Voluntary Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation.

Renewed efforts to advance the goals of South-South cooperation call for a coordinated approach among the entire United Nations family. This session of the General Assembly will be considering a revised version of the guidelines for the review of policies and procedures concerning technical cooperation and the Secretary-General's report on strengthening the integration of technical and economic cooperation approaches to development.

I encourage all members of the United Nations family to include a South-South dimension in their operational activities in keeping with the guidelines once they are endorsed.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I remind representatives that this meeting is exclusively devoted to the commemoration of an important anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. It is not a regular working meeting to consider in depth the question of South-South technical cooperation. I therefore urge all speakers to manage their time in the most cooperative way possible.

I call first on the representative of Nigeria, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Akunwafor (Nigeria): It is my honour and privilege to make the following statement on behalf of the Group of African States at the United Nations.

Please allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your recent well-deserved election to the presidency of our General Assembly at its fifty-third session. In Nigeria, my country, and Africa, my continent and region, we have no doubt that the conduct of the Assembly's affairs will benefit a great deal from your experience and wisdom.

Granted that all African States are members of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the Group of 77, whose original idea it was to establish the mechanism for promoting technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC), my brief remarks this morning would not be properly rooted should we fail to recall that Africa's love for and faith in the necessity and potential of TCDC date back to 1977, one year ahead of the birth of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. Meeting at its twenty-ninth ordinary session in Libreville, Gabon, in July 1977, the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) first recognized that

"TCDC is a historical imperative brought about by the need for a new international order" [and] "a conscious, systematic and politically motivated process developed to create a framework of multiple links between developing countries".

Within the same July 1977, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU endorsed the Ministers' recommendations, which were again reaffirmed by the OAU Council of Ministers in July 1978 at their thirty-first ordinary session, held in Khartoum, Sudan. Consequently, the then nearly 50 OAU member delegations became part and parcel of the delegations from 138 States which, in Buenos Aires on 12 September 1978, adopted by consensus a plan of action now known as the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

What subsequently gladdened the hearts of all Africans — and, I must add, the hearts of citizens of all developing countries — was that singular display of wisdom and sensitivity on the part of this Assembly in December 1978, when it resolved to endorse the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, as it concerns the development needs of more than two thirds of United Nations membership, and urged all Governments and elements of the United Nations system to implement its recommendations.

Today, two decades later and on the threshold of a new millennium, the twentieth anniversary of the blueprint Buenos Aires Plan of Action should afford us all not just an opportunity to roll out the drums and beat our chests in celebration of the achievements we have made. Today, and equally importantly, we all should undergo a sober reflection, stocktaking and candid inward search that will show us concretely how much we ought to have achieved and the problems or further challenges we need to overcome.

Mr. Ka (Senegal), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Indeed, nothing implies the importance of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action more than the words of our good friend and the highly resourceful outgoing Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Mr. James Gustav Speth, when he reminded us in May this year that, for the developing countries, TCDC and South-South cooperation are no longer options, but imperatives in our age of globalization. As we celebrate, we are therefore justifiably joyful that UNDP has not abandoned the lot of the developing countries. Particularly through its Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and its prolific publicity literature, UNDP has helped in no small measure to increase awareness of the importance of TCDC and the development needs of the developing countries. As a reliable catalyst and active partner of national Governments and organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, the Special Unit has been promoting and monitoring the global application of TCDC in a variety of ways, including sponsorship of TCDC activities-based studies and assessments, enhancement of national capacities for the management of TCDC, and matching capacities with needs.

It is out of such sensitization and enhancement efforts that a number of countries have come to allocate significant resources for TCDC activities from their national budgets and/or UNDP country allocations. It is out of such efforts that research — for instance, into medicinal plants in one of the South countries — has recently yielded a welcome lead into the network research and management of the menace of the sickle-cell disease in some other developing countries, thus raising hope for a definite cure some day. We are also happy that complementarities of natural endowments among the developing countries and their varying stages of development, as highlighted in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, have deepened technical cooperation among some countries in the South, thus providing them with vast opportunities for knowledge transfer or exchange with relative ease and at less expense than if they had had to acquire similar knowledge from the developed countries.

Neither must we fail to acknowledge at this gathering the supporting and positive role being similarly played by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for the promotion of South-South trade and finance, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Non-Aligned Movement and the South Centre in support of the G-77 initiatives for cooperation.

In conclusion, let me return to a point made in our earlier outline. As we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, we will be doing our collective memory and posterity a great favour if we also spare a little time to highlight areas which our best of efforts might have neither reached nor yielded desired results from.

First, even a full-course intra-South technical cooperation programme, involving all developing countries, would still need official development assistance to succeed in achieving its goal. The continuing decline

of success in achieving the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance, which is a major external source for the financing of development, therefore needs to be reversed in order to enable TCDC to have the crucial input to infrastructural and social sector development from the developed countries.

Secondly, and made even worse by the recent adverse global financial crisis, all developing countries, especially the 40 least developed among them, most of which are in Africa, are being severely hindered in their cooperating efforts by excruciatingly heavy external debt burdens. This handicap is especially bad for the heavily indebted poor countries. One of the many measures to alleviate its negative impact lies in the conversion of debt to promote development investments, in accordance with the needs of developing countries.

Thirdly, market access to exports from developing countries is one crucial component that will enhance the capacity of each developing country to cooperate more gainfully and meaningfully. The current international trading system will assist developing countries, especially those producing commodities, more gainfully if, and only if, the system is made multilaterally equitable, secure, non-discriminatory and predictable in its rules and thereby capable of enhancing the economic capacity of the developing countries concerned.

These are the barest minimum of core needs of the developing countries. If they are properly addressed, and if there is the required increase in core resources for United Nations Development Programme funding, as we are about to enter the twenty-first year of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, a means will be generated to eradicate poverty and appropriately protect and empower the citizenry of developing countries to access the benefits of globalization in an interdependent world.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I call next on the representative of Nepal, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Shah (Nepal): I will heed the President's repeated advice and be as brief as possible.

On behalf of the member States of the Asian Group, I should like to pay our tribute to the spirit and efforts of the 138 countries which adopted the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries 20 years ago in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Today is an occasion to renew our commitment and to reaffirm the continued relevance of South-South cooperation, with the ultimate objective of building a more equitable global partnership for development and peace. It is also an occasion for all of us to review not only the achievements of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, but, more important, the lessons learned from its implementation.

In the 20 years since the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, profound and almost unrecognizable changes have taken place in international relations. Greater interdependence in the world, brought about by globalization and economic liberalization, is posing new challenges and risks, but it also provides a new impetus and a new rationale for closer cooperation among nations. We believe that further strengthening of South-South cooperation is an essential instrument for ensuring the equitable participation of developing countries in the emerging global economy.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of Poland, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Wyzner (Poland): I am privileged to offer a few observations today on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Twenty years ago the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries marked a new perception of the environment needed for international dialogue on technical cooperation. For a long time this cooperation had been concentrated almost exclusively along traditional lines of North-South partnership, while the growing potential of the developing countries themselves had not been fully taken into consideration. The Buenos Aires Conference generated a new type of international relations, based on closer regional exchange of experiences between developing countries, with the use of a special technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) modality anchored in the operational activities of the United Nations system.

In the last two decades a number of developing countries have emerged as areas of considerable

economic development and as important sources of technological innovation. We note with satisfaction the increasing economic potential of the South, which is becoming an important player in the world economy. On the other hand, this fact reinforces both the opportunities and the further need of the developing countries to forge the links of cooperation among themselves. To this end, TCDC offers effective tools for an exchange of experiences in technical cooperation and problem-solving between developing countries in pursuit of their mutual interests with the final goal of increasing the competitiveness of their economies in the global markets. At the same time, regional cooperation serves well the purpose of winning the support of civil societies for national policies, as it is easier for them to relate to regional problems before they look beyond these to global ones.

We are pleased to note that the United Nations has played a crucial role in the process of implementing the TCDC modality in the operational activities of the system. Special credit should be given to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for incorporating these practices in programmes realized with a wide variety of partners on local levels and for establishing a Trust Fund which serves to intensify South-South cooperation.

By endorsing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action in its resolution of 1978, the General Assembly gave tangible proof of the commitment of the international community to the spirit and the ultimate objective of the Plan. On a later occasion the General Assembly endorsed new directions to strengthen TCDC's role in offering technical advice for developmental activities. At the same time, the Economic and Social Council recommended that first consideration be given to TCDC for use in development efforts in the United Nations system as well as with all other partners. As a result, intensified actions by several entities of the United Nations system, such as UNDP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and some of the regional economic commissions were undertaken to include TCDC in the mainstream of their activities. However, a lot of work has yet to be done in this field, and it is our belief that strengthening of the TCDC has to be encouraged as an inherent part of developing effective regional cooperation.

Taking into account the views expressed in the Agenda for Development, as well as the position taken last year by the General Assembly in its resolution on economic and technical cooperation among developing countries, we believe that the United Nations system should continue its efforts to strengthen South-South cooperation, which, to quote from that resolution, "constitutes an important element of international cooperation for development and is an essential basis for national and collective self-reliance as well as a means of ensuring the effective integration and participation of developing countries in the world economy and ... is not a substitute for, but rather complementary to, North-South cooperation". (*resolution 52/205, para. 2*)

In the Group of Eastern European States we realize that there is considerable unexplored potential for forming new partnership ties among the countries of the South and the countries of our Group. There is also a need to extend these links beyond the old divisions of South and North or East and West. On this solemn occasion, we reaffirm our commitment to achieving that goal in the years to come, in accordance with the theme of our meeting today, "Towards a global partnership for South-South cooperation" in the new millennium.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on the representative of the Dominican Republic, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mrs. Aguiar (Dominican Republic) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I am greatly honoured, as coordinator of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, to hail this auspicious anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, which bears the name of a progressive and forward-looking city in our hemisphere.

In 1978 the Buenos Aires Plan of Action gave impetus to new forms of South-South cooperation among developing countries. Its goals included promoting the capacity of developing countries to harness their own means to find solutions to the problems of development in keeping with their own values, aspirations and specific needs; promoting and reinforcing a collective capacity among developing countries by exchanging experiences, sharing technical resources and developing complementary capabilities; increasing the volume and enhancing the quality of international cooperation and increasing the efficiency of the resources devoted to general technical cooperation through the pooling of skills; and promoting the transfer of appropriate technology and expertise. Since those goals were set, new approaches to subregional, regional and interregional economic cooperation have emerged, compelling our countries to revitalize the channels of this cooperation.

The Plan was proposed at the historic moment of the most recent wave of decolonization, particularly in Africa but also in Asia and the Caribbean, which marked a milestone in international cooperation. Acknowledged as an effective way of promoting development among developing countries, the form, content and goals of South-South cooperation have brought about significant changes, which are now taking place, however, within a process of globalization that affects vital organs of our national economies and productive systems on the one hand, and, on the other, the traditional mechanisms of social solidarity. The Plan's merits were immediately recognized by the General Assembly, which, in resolution 33/134, endorsed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, considering it to be "an important instrument of the international community to intensify and strengthen co-operation among developing countries". (*resolution 33/134, para. 4*)

As an essential complementary component, the General Assembly established, by resolution 38/201, the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund, designed to support technical and economic cooperation among developing countries of the Group of 77, and to finance feasibility and pre-investment studies and assist the implementation of projects for economic cooperation among developing countries.

The validity and force of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action have been confirmed by the progress made towards goals such as promoting the capacity of countries to harness their own means, the fostering of collective capacity and the exchange of experiences with a view to developing complementary capacities. However, since the laws of the market often prevail, our countries are forced to cope with this unprecedented challenge by modifying their analytical approaches and the strategies that should be implemented in the developing world.

We are now seeing the emergence of decisive factors that are transforming the usual framework, including the end of the role of the State as manager and entrepreneur; technological advances; the tightness of domestic markets; and the globalization of decisions relating to direct foreign investment. Therefore, to sustain successful South-South cooperation, our countries must make use of competitive advantages resulting from a better distribution of resources, market efficiency and economies of scale and specialization.

However, the principles of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action remain as valid as they were in 1978: solidarity, or the principle of brotherhood among nations, in which two or more join forces to achieve common goals; sovereignty, or the principle of self-determination of States and mutual cooperation within the framework of the integration of countries and regions; dignity, or the principle that reaffirms the legitimacy and equality of rights and respect for the diversity of countries without conditions or dependency among cooperating partners.

We must keep in mind, however, that the successes we have achieved thanks to the Buenos Aires Plan of Action should in no way be presented as a smokescreen to hide our priorities. We must work to pool our needs and capacities in order to achieve better solutions in key areas such as agricultural development, food production and processing technologies.

A major obstacle to this is the shortage of resources for development, which could be eliminated or alleviated by the fact that certain economies of the group of developing countries are emerging as surplus economies, meaning that they have the capacity to export capital. It would be desirable to make greater use of such a resource. In this regard, there is a need for the political will to create regional mechanisms to promote the flow of capital investment within each of the developing regions. The modalities of technical cooperation among developing countries, of reciprocity, exchange and cooperative common use and contribution, would thus reflect the previously established principles of a balanced cooperation among equals.

It would be possible to make many other proposals for analysis and discussion. And the very fact that today we are discussing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and setting innovative tasks for ourselves speaks eloquently of the achievements of the last 20 years in the area of cooperation among the peoples and countries of the South.

However, we must appeal to those countries that have been left behind by this new plan — landlocked countries, small island States, and those subject to desertification and climate change. There is a place for them as well in this bold new movement.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on the representative of Andorra, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

Mr. Minoves-Triquell (Andorra) (*interpretation from French*): The Group of Western European and other States is pleased to be able to celebrate the twentieth

anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. The past two decades have shown us that the growth in horizontal South-South exchanges is an essential element for development. In that way the developing countries can control exchanges in a way that is absolutely fair with partners whose technical and economic goals are similar but whose concrete experiences are complementary to theirs. In a world that is increasingly globalized, particularly at the economic level, it is therefore important that developing economies maintain steady relations with each other so that the flow of information and cooperation can bring together States that formerly did not know each other well or that encountered each other only through their common partners in the North. It is necessary for such solidarity and South-South projects to come into being so that globalization, that late twentieth century phenomenon, can be truly multidimensional.

Development is a process from which all of humankind benefits. The rich countries will, in fact, be truly rich only when the living conditions of the majority of humankind rise to the same level as those of the most fortunate among us. Furthermore, because of globalization, recent crises in emerging economies risk spreading to the industrialized States, which again demonstrates the interrelationship that exists between the rich and the poor countries. Development concerns all of us, as the Group of Western European and other States is fully aware.

The States members of the Group of Western European and other States support all forms of development efforts and take a very positive view of the proliferation of South-South cooperation that followed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. The Bandung Framework for Asia-Africa Cooperation, the varied cooperation activities that have recently taken place between Latin America and Eastern Europe and the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States show the extent to which South-South initiatives can and must spread. However, it is important to note that technical and economic cooperation between countries is complementary to North-South relations, not a substitute for them. Effective coordination between those two types of cooperation will be increasingly required.

It is the duty of the Members of the United Nations to devise in the months to come the best formulas so that South-South and North-South cooperation can work together and have a synergistic effect. We must define a new partnership between developed countries and developing countries in which we all take upon ourselves our own responsibilities while leaving behind the errors of the past. The new model for development will certainly involve a combination of solidarity and responsibility in which North-South action will be integrated with South-South cooperation. Numerous small, but independent and successful, South-South projects can create conditions for setting up other targeted and effective development assistance projects.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

Progress in communications and information technology has made globalization irreversible in all its aspects. The developing countries are discovering possibilities for cooperation and mutual enrichment, which we must encourage. In this, the Group of Western European and other States congratulates the United Nations bodies that are acting to promote such exchanges, such as the United Nations Development Programme and the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. Here in the United Nations we are starting a new debate on development that will not leave out South-South cooperation. The Assembly can rest assured that the States members of the Group of Western European and other States will make their contribution.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on the representative of the United States of America, the host country.

Mr. Squadron (United States of America): I am delighted, on behalf of the United States, the host country, to join in this discussion of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC). It provides us all with the opportunity to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action of 1978, which was intended to encourage self-reliance and mutual support among developing countries through the exchange of technical information. Those goals are as valid today as when the Buenos Aires Plan of Action was first adopted.

The United States supports economic cooperation among developing countries (ECDC). We agree wholeheartedly with the view of the Secretary-General, who said in May last year that South-South cooperation must be more than a slogan. At the same time, we agree with the 1997 statement of the tenth session of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, which noted that South-

South cooperation should be viewed not as a substitute for, but rather as a complement to, North-South cooperation. We have incorporated the principles of TCDC into many of our bilateral development assistance programmes.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee also supports both TCDC and ECDC. The United States applauds the current role of the United Nations in encouraging TCDC, in particular the efforts of the Special Unit housed within the United Nations Development Programme. We believe that TCDC fits very well within broader efforts to promote coordination, cooperation and reform among all the nations of the world.

The United States believes that we should increase the effectiveness of existing TCDC resources. Specifically, we believe that it is critically important to continue developing programme effectiveness indicators for those programmes. Developing good feedback mechanisms that measure the effectiveness of programmes benefits not only those who fund the programmes but the beneficiaries as well. As beneficiary countries contribute to and receive reports on which programmes work best, they will be in a better position to disseminate best-practice information to other potential beneficiaries. That is the essence of TCDC: developing countries helping each other.

Good feedback reporting on programme benefits by beneficiary countries will benefit everybody in another way: programme analysis enhances the credibility of those programmes and makes it easier to justify funding decisions. Insightful analysis advances the goal of transparency, which benefits both those who provide funds and the beneficiaries.

In conclusion, the United States is extremely pleased to host this discussion. We thank representatives for their attendance and participation. We look forward to a fruitful exchange of views with the other nations of the world on this subject.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on the representative of Indonesia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to congratulate the President and the General Assembly on having organized this important commemorative meeting. We are very grateful to all the Members that last year supported the initiative of the Group of 77 and China that led to the adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly to convene this commemorative meeting.

Since its inception, the Group of 77 has always attached fundamental importance to promoting economic and technical cooperation among developing countries. Such cooperation is necessary to reduce the vulnerability of the developing countries to external factors and to maximize complementarities for accelerating the development of their economies. The historic Buenos Aires Plan of Action, adopted 20 years ago, in September 1978, and subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly, was an expression of the aspirations of developing countries and a reflection of their desire to promote economic cooperation among themselves as a complement to North-South cooperation and as an integral part of the collective action of the Group aimed at the promotion of international cooperation for development. It marked the beginning of a new phase of such cooperation, providing a blueprint with a well-defined mechanism for implementation and follow-up. The major thrust of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action remains of vital importance, and it is even more relevant today as a result of globalization and liberalization. The Group of 77 and China renews its commitment to intensify cooperation among developing countries for the attainment of collective self-reliance, as is evidenced in the recently adopted Declaration of the summit of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Declaration of Foreign Ministers of the Group of 77 adopted last month.

In recent years, the forces of globalization and liberalization have brought dramatic changes on the global economic scene. For developing countries, various constraints beyond their control prevent them from fully participating in this process. The majority of developing countries and, in particular, the least developed and the landlocked countries, with their meagre resources and unfavourable external supportive environment, are faced with the seemingly insurmountable challenge of global competition, which has tended to marginalize them. In this context, if South-South cooperation were more vigorously pursued, the developing countries would have greater leverage on their external environment and on the North-South cooperation dialogue. At the same time, it would contribute to solving many problems of development in the developing countries and thus enable them to face the challenge of integrating with the global economy more successfully on equitable and symmetric terms.

The developing countries have always been conscious of their own responsibility for promoting their economic development and implementing economic and technical cooperation among themselves. The potential of economic cooperation among developing countries (ECDC) and technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) for trade and development is particularly great at this juncture in view of the increased liberalization and openness of developing countries and the substantial efforts to reform their trade policies. In this context, it is imperative that the Global System of Trade Preferences among developing countries (GSTP), whose origin is in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, be further strengthened. There is a need to consider giving new impetus to GSTP negotiations by adjusting past GSTP concessions to the currently applied tariff and import measures resulting from national tariff and trade reforms, as well as from the Uruguay Round agreements. It is also important to strengthen regional and interregional trade by enlarging participation, expanding product coverage and deepening mutual concessions. The potential effectiveness of the GSTP has been substantially increased with the re-evaluation of the tariff instruments in developing countries' regimes following large-scale liberalization of non-tariff measures by many developing countries.

For instance, the GSTP Agreement provides that the special needs of the least developed countries, including landlocked countries should clearly be recognized, and that concrete preferential measures in favour of these countries should be agreed upon. The least developed countries and many landlocked countries will not be required to make concessions on a reciprocal basis. These measures in the GSTP Agreement are aimed at boosting the exports of the least developed countries, thereby enhancing their living standards.

The Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund and the trust fund for South-South Cooperation, established with a view to supporting activities on economic and technical cooperation among developing countries, were of critical importance to the Group of 77 and China in order to achieve national collective self-reliance. It is essential today to increase the resources of both Funds in order to support South-South cooperation. I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to all countries, particularly to donor countries, to contribute generously to both Funds with a view to enabling the Group of 77 and China to continue supporting South-South cooperative projects.

The United Nations system is uniquely placed to assist developing countries in making the transition to a new economic era. The ability of its institutions to objectively analyse economic trends and to indicate policy options that give primacy to developmental considerations is the backbone of economic cooperation among developing countries. The Group of 77 and China draws heavily on the support provided to it by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations system as a whole for the implementation of objectives set out in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for TCDC. In this context, and with a view to marking both this anniversary and the ongoing efforts of the United Nations system in supporting South-South cooperation, I would like to propose that the General Assembly should declare a United Nations day on South-South cooperation. We also recognize the work undertaken by many institutions of the South aimed at providing a valuable contribution to increasing the awareness of the international community, particularly in terms of the need for international cooperation requirements in support of ECDC and TCDC. In this regard, the ongoing activities of the Non-Aligned Movement's centre for South-South technical cooperation in Jakarta deserve our support.

Due to the present world economic situation, the question of intensifying South-South cooperation needs to be accorded top priority by the United Nations system and the international community. The Group of 77 and China thoroughly deliberated this question at the recently held ministerial meeting in New York. The core of the discussions was on the indispensability of collective self-reliance not only as a vital instrument for accelerating development and eradicating poverty, but also as crucial for engaging the North in meaningful dialogue with the South.

The main focus for intensifying South-South cooperation centres on the Caracas Programme of Action and the Buenos Aires Plan of Action on TCDC. While the implementation of these two programmes has yielded some results, much more needs to be done. In this regard, the question of harmonizing both programmes was squarely faced at the recently held South-South Conference in San José. The Conference rightly recommended to the Group of 77 and China to consolidate and coordinate its activities on various issues and in various forums, in order to harmonize South-South initiatives.

With increasing obstacles to our economic development, with the North-South dialogue yet to get under way, and with emerging complementarities among developing countries, it is even more urgent today than it was 20 years ago when the Buenos Aires Plan of Action was adopted to broaden the scope of our own technical and economic cooperation.

While it is true that we must provide greater momentum to ECDC and TCDC activities, we should guard against undertaking projects without fully assessing their potential. Indeed, this can greatly harm the very cause that we seek to promote. We must at all times remember that ECDC and TCDC projects must provide mutual benefits to developing countries and should be economically viable. In this context, I am pleased to announce that the office of the Chairman of the Group of 77 will set up shortly a research programme on South-South cooperation in close collaboration with the Group of 77 chapters and with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and other relevant United Nations institutions, with a view to promoting research studies in the field of South-South cooperation.

As the Group of 77 and China have pointed out on many occasions, the Caracas Programme of Action and the Buenos Aires Plan of Action are unusual in concept. They provide a plan of action with clearly laid down mechanisms for support, follow-up and review with diverse components woven together into a precise timetable for implementation. They should have provided ECDC and TCDC with the dynamism that was earlier lacking. The experience of the past two decades has raised several questions, relating in particular to such matters as the financing of South-South cooperation. Today there is a need to find appropriate organizational modalities effectively to tap resources from various international organizations and financial institutions that could be directed towards supporting South-South cooperation activities and programmes and to outline a common strategy to foster international support for the regional and subregional economic groupings of developing countries and encourage mutual links and cooperation among them. In this context, let me take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to countries that continue to support South-South cooperation, particularly the Government of Japan, which is generously supporting the forthcoming conference on subregional and regional economic integration, to be held from 1 to 4 December 1998 in Bali.

Let me take this opportunity to reiterate, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, our strong support for the activities being undertaken by the UNDP and its Special Unit for TCDC with a view to supporting South-South cooperation. In their final declaration, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 who met last month in New York expressed their appreciation for the support provided by the UNDP and its Special Unit for TCDC in support of South-South cooperation, and encouraged the UNDP to continue to expand this cooperation with the Group of 77 for the benefit of all developing countries.

Finally, let me state that the United Nations system should articulate a global strategy that could enable all economic groupings of the South to respond adequately to the challenges of globalization and liberalization. This is an issue which should be discussed in depth by the high-level conference on subregional and regional economic integration to be held from 1 to 4 December 1998 in Bali, Indonesia.

I am confident that the forthcoming Bali conference and the South Summit will set the stage for developing countries to project their collective vision of international cooperation for development and of the strengthening of South-South cooperation for the next millennium.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I call next on the Permanent Representative of Austria, who will speak on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Sucharipa (Austria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union at this commemorative meeting of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated country Cyprus, as well as the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area, Iceland and Norway, align themselves with this statement.

Today the General Assembly celebrates the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. We want to make use of this opportunity to reflect on the lessons and accomplishments in promoting technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) over the last two decades, and to recognize the changing environment for global partnerships in the era of globalization.

Twenty years ago, the General Assembly endorsed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action as an important instrument of the international community to intensify and strengthen cooperation among developing countries, and it requested Governments, international organizations and the United Nations development system to promote and implement the objectives of the Plan.

South-South cooperation, through TCDC and economic cooperation among developing countries (ECDC) is a principal strategy in support of national and international development efforts. It is an indispensable mechanism to ensure participation in the global economy. Technical cooperation characterized by North-South relations remains an important factor in promoting sustainable human development. Since the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, profound changes have taken place in international relations. The deepening of interdependence among nations, a phenomenon we call globalization, provides new impetus, new opportunities and a new rationale for closer cooperation, as well as new challenges for States. We welcome the initiatives at regional and subregional levels to strengthen cooperation and integration among local economies.

We realize that we live in a rapidly changing world, and we have gathered here today to look to the future. The theme of our commemoration is "Towards a global partnership for South-South cooperation in the new millennium", and at the panel meeting this afternoon we should explore the role and relevance of technical and economic cooperation among developing countries in an increasingly interdependent world.

The European Union attaches great importance to technical cooperation among developing countries. The Union reaffirms its commitment to supporting South-South cooperation and technical and economic cooperation among developing countries. In promoting TCDC, developing countries harness and utilize the capacities that exist in their own countries. TCDC is a useful tool for and among developing countries, but donor countries must play an active and supportive role, fostering an increased use of the TCDC modality in development cooperation. The United Nations system has a key responsibility as promoter and catalyst for South-South cooperation. In this context, the European Union would like to reiterate that TCDC should not be treated as a special programme, but should be integrated in the overall work of the operational activities of the United Nations system.

The potential development impact of TCDC on developing countries is increasingly recognized, and the European Union notes with satisfaction the expansion of the use of TCDC over the years. In this context, the European Union would like to mention as an example the Partners in Population and Development initiative supported by the United Nations Population Fund. The enhanced decentralization within the United Nations development system will further TCDC as a tool for development programming and as a logical option for development cooperation.

In this regard, the European Union commends the work of the TCDC Special Unit within the United Nations Development Programme and the ongoing support of the United Nations Development Programme for the TCDC modality, which is being given first consideration in programming as a corporate policy by the UNDP Administrator. This support is to be followed up by other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system.

The European Union believes that the revised guidelines for the review of policies and procedures concerning TCDC have accentuated the continued validity and relevance of TCDC as an instrument for assisting developing countries to participate effectively in the emerging global environment. With these tools in place, we hope South-South cooperation can prosper in the next millennium.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa, who will speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Mr. Jele (South Africa): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement at this meeting commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

Coming so soon after our summit in Durban, this meeting could not be more timely. The issues and concerns of developing countries at the Buenos Aires meeting continue to challenge our commitment to South-South cooperation. For this reason, South-South cooperation continues to be one of the sound bases on which the developing countries can extricate themselves through their own efforts from the mire of underdevelopment.

The theme for this commemorative meeting is fitting and captures the interdependence of our global efforts for

the full realization of our objective. Like the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the advances made so far in South-South cooperation help facilitate the construction of a bridge across our experiences and efforts. It unites and consolidates national, regional, subregional and interregional efforts through various bodies and delivery systems. Through technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) developing countries will be able to respond effectively and positively to the challenges of globalization and liberalization, thus moving away from the risk of marginalization. These efforts are indispensable for ensuring an equitable mode of participation for developing countries in the global economy.

Such efforts would also be underpinned by North-South cooperation and be directed at strengthening and accelerating technology transfers, skills, knowledge and information dissemination in the framework of South-South cooperation. To this end, we recall General Assembly resolution 3251 (XXIX) of 4 December 1974, which mandated the establishment of the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries to promote TCDC on a system-wide basis. Indeed, that decision could not have been more timely and visionary, given the significant distance we have travelled to fully realize the aim, among others, of making TCDC a key component of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) poverty eradication strategy.

In underscoring the need for South-South cooperation, we note with appreciation the marking of this commemoration at various levels — the high-level plenary session, the substantive panel discussion and the exhibit on South-South cooperation. It is through similar efforts that awareness-building and the need for the mobilization of efforts to attain South-South cooperation may become a reality.

We commend the Special Unit for continuing to formulate its distinct programme to strengthen the capacity of developing countries and to mutually reinforce cooperation in key areas for development. Resource provision for capacity-building is crucial and needs to be provided on a continuous, secure and incremental basis. To this end, we continue to make a case for an increase in the core resources of UNDP in order to consolidate the progress made thus far, as well as to cover the needs of other developing countries.

We call on the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing countries and UNDP, as well as other organizations, to jointly formulate concrete recommendations on the follow-up and implementation of the San José Declaration and Plan of Action, as adopted by the South-South Conference on Finance, Trade and Investment. We believe that this would have added value for all our efforts to enhance the resurgence of interest in South-South cooperation to support the efforts of developing countries to participate equitably in the global economy.

It is our belief that, taken as a whole, such efforts would go a long way towards intensifying current processes to strengthen various interregional dialogues, cooperation and the exchange of experiences among various regional economic groupings for South-South cooperation. We hope that the report of the Secretary-General (TCDC/10/2) on the review of the progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action; the decisions of the High-level Committee; the recommendations of the South Commission; and its analytical summary of information received from Governments, other organizations in the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations on the policies and activities undertaken to promote TCDC will, despite other constraints, prove that TCDC continues to be a widely used mechanism between countries, underpinning many other local arrangements. This also goes with the necessary awareness to adopt more effective methods of delivery and policies.

The importance of these initiatives lies in the observation that most developing countries now allocate significant resources from their national budgets for TCDC ventures to complement an array of other efforts which are also mirrored through regional institutions and other actors, such as the South Centre and UNDP through regional bureaus and country offices.

We hope that the Special Unit, by supporting national and regional development initiatives, can continue to be a catalyst and an active partner in promoting and monitoring the global trends in TCDC and its application. The same applies to other United Nations agencies which have continued in similar fashion in areas of their own competence.

We also note with satisfaction progress made in the implementation of the new-directions strategy for technical cooperation among developing countries.

Finally, we underscore the need for developing countries and the United Nations system to increase support for TCDC and to strengthen the commitment to promote it as a useful tool for development. The Special

Unit also needs to keep its separate identity within UNDP in order to continue being effective in its work, while at the same time being complemented by other developmental agencies and actors.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Konishi (Japan): The concept of South-South cooperation emerged in the 1970s as a means of strengthening the solidarity of the South in its struggle against the North and to promote among the developing countries a collective self-reliance that would enable them to participate in the international economic system.

When the cold war came to an end, this concept of South-South cooperation changed. Today, South-South cooperation has been widely accepted as an effective modality of development cooperation in the spirit of "sharing the experiences". Moreover, a new modality of triangular cooperation involving the new dimension of cooperation between the North and the South has emerged.

Japan has actively supported South-South cooperation because it provides useful assistance tailored to the specific needs and conditions of individual developing countries and because it contributes to broadening the spectrum of actors involved in development cooperation. Japan hosted the Tokyo International Conference on African Development in 1993 and the Asia-Africa Forums of 1994 and 1997. It also convened the Conference on Promoting South-South Cooperation in May this year. It has implemented various triangular cooperation projects, cooperated in institution-building of the organizations responsible for South-South cooperation in developing countries, and provided financial assistance for such cooperation through the Japan-United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Resources Development Fund: $2 million in 1996 and 1997, and $4 million in 1998.

Japan commits itself to continuing to play this role in the future. The second Tokyo International Conference on African Development, which will be convened from 19 to 21 October 1998 with the participation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the heads of State of a number of African countries, will emphasize the importance of South-South cooperation, and in particular Asia-Africa cooperation, including private sector development.

In further broadening the scope of South-South cooperation on the basis of the concept of "sharing the experiences", ownership by developing countries is of great importance. It is critical that developing countries themselves fully accept that South-South cooperation is an effective modality of development cooperation that goes beyond enhancing their solidarity. While South-South cooperation is not a substitute for but a complement to North-South cooperation, it embodies various comparative advantages to North-South cooperation, such as the exchange of technologies and know-how more appropriate to the actual conditions in developing countries.

In order to further strengthen South-South cooperation, developing countries should make the most of such comparative advantages, understanding that both South-South cooperation and North-South cooperation are key elements in the realization of their national development programmes. And it is essential to develop and strengthen the human resources who will be responsible for the implementation of South-South cooperation.

Developed countries, in their turn, should support the efforts of developing countries through triangular cooperation involving the private sector and non-governmental organizations. Furthermore, they should convey to the developing countries the know-how and expertise they have derived from their own experience in development cooperation.

Finally, to promote South-South cooperation, it is necessary to create an environment that permits easy access to information on successful examples of such efforts. It would be of great value to all if a system could be established to collect those successful examples from different countries and organizations and to make them available to developing countries.

In conclusion, South-South cooperation has enormous potential as an effective modality of development cooperation in the twenty-first century. It is up to developing countries to take the initiative for South-South cooperation, and developed countries should continue to actively support such cooperation.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): The commemorative meeting to mark the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries is now concluded.

The meeting rose at noon.